The Unitarian Calendar

The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink
Together, dwarfed or godlike, bond or free:

—Tennyson.

Vol. 5 NOVEMBER — 1912 No. 3

OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and 376 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Cal.

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Founded in 1825.

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The Unitarian Calendar

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MODERN LAZINESS

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON

It is customary to complain of the bustle and strenuousness of our epoch. But in truth the chief mark of our epoch is a profound laziness and fatigue; and the fact is that the real laziness is the cause of the apparent bustle. Take one quite external case; the streets are noisy with taxicabs and motor cars; but this is not due to human activity, but to human repose. There would be less bustle if there were more activity, if people were simply walking about. Our world would be more silent if it were more strenuous. And this which is true of the apparent physical bustle is true also of the apparent bustle of the intellect. Most of the machinery of modern language is labor-saving machinery; and it saves mental labor very much more than it ought. Scientific phrases are used like scientific wheels and piston-rods, to make swifter and smoother yet the path of the comfortable. Long words go rattling by us like long railway trains. We know they are carrying thousands who are too tired or too indolent to walk and think for themselves. It is a good exercise to try for once in a way to express any opinion one holds in words of one syllable. If you say, "The social utility of the indeterminate sentence is recognized by all criminologists as a part of our sociological evolution towards a more human and scientific view of punishment," you can go on talking like that for hours with hardly a movement of the gray matter

inside your skull. But if you begin, "I wish Jones to go to gaol, and Brown to say when Jones shall come out," you will discover with a thrill of horror that you are obliged to think. The long words are not the hard words; it is the short words that are hard. There is much more metaphysical subtlety in the word "damn" than in the word "degeneration."

But these long comfortable words that save modern people the toil of reasoning have one particular aspect in which they are especially ruinous and confusing. This difficulty occurs when the same long word is used in different connections to mean quite different things. Thus, to take a well-known instance, the word "idealist" has one meaning as a piece of philosophy and quite another as a piece of moral rhetoric. In the same way the scientific materialists have had just reason to complain of people mixing up "materialist" as a term of cosmology with "materialist" as a moral taunt. So, to take a cheaper instance, the man who hates "progressives" in London always calls himself a "progressive" in South Africa.

A confusion quite as unmeaning as this has arisen in connection with the word "liberal," as applied to religion and as applied to politics and society. It is often suggested that all Liberals ought to be free-thinkers, because they ought to love everything that is free. You might just as well say that all idealists ought to be High Churchmen because they ought to love everything that is high. You might as well say that Low Churchmen ought to like Low Mass, or that Broad Churchmen ought to like broad jokes. The thing is a mere accident of words. In actual modern Europe a free-thinker does not mean a man who thinks for himself. It means a man who, having thought for himself, has come to one particular class of conclusions, the material origin of phenomena, the impossibility of miracles, the improb-

bility of personal immortality, and so on. And none of these ideas are particularly liberal. Nay, indeed almost all these ideas are definitely illiberal.

FROM THE LETTER OF A UNITARIAN MISSIONARY

"There is but one other thing needed at ———, and I shall endeavor to arrange some way for this, without calling on you. I need more newspaper space in which to tell the people in ——— more about Unitarianism. There are thousands here dissatisfied in their own church, holding our beliefs and do not know it.

"I have been surprised to find out that a large per cent. of those who come to my lectures, rain or shine, do not believe in a future life, and stranger still, a few out of this number, I feel, will join my organization.

"I feel that I have made many warm friends here, and, so far as I know, not a SINGLE enemy. Being once an orthodox believer myself, I can too truly appreciate those errors which are held sacred. I made it a rule never to say anything from my platform that would belittle the other churches, and never to explain away any orthodox faith, without giving those who are present something in its place right then and there.

"I have had occasion in my life to be a close student of humanity, and I have found that the 'knock out' method is not constructive. I have had occasions to note that a superstition that contains some good is better for some people than skepticism, and to rob one of it, without substituting something better, is damaging to the individual and to society."

THE USE OF NONSENSE

The serious young woman looked up from the volume she was studying, and surveyed her sister with a grave countenance. "What are you giggling over?" she said. "You should not waste your time on nonsense." The other was laughing over a jest that she had heard, and as she rose and made a curtsey to the student she hummed a foolish verse by Gelett Burgess—

"I never saw a purple cow,
I never hope to see one;
And yet I think that anyhow
I'd rather see than be one."

"That," said Portia, "is an absurd jingle. How can you spend precious time over mere amusement when there is so much trouble in the world?" Priscilla dimpled. "I am going down to make something nice for supper," she said, "and I am saving all the funny things I know that I may tell them to grandfather and make him laugh. We don't help the trouble by standing and weeping over the broken pitcher. Do let me have my nonsense, Portia. It has its place in the scheme of things." Priscilla was right. A sense of humor, and a love of fun, tide their possessors over some very real sorrows. Austerity has no particular claim to be considered saintly, and folly with its cap and bells once in a while does angelic work. Blessings on the children with their merry laughter. Blessings on the old people who have not forgotten how to be sunny. Take it all in all, this world of ours is not so bad a place. Every season brings its gifts of love from heaven, the skies are oftener blue than gray, the birds sing in the branches, fathers and mothers bend over the cradle, and the joy of life is deeper than the woe.

—*The Christian Life.*

THANKSGIVING DAY

"Let us on that day . . . meet our loved ones in the privacy of our homes, not forgetting the unfortunate, the needy, and the sorrowing, but letting our hearts go out to them with the charity of our sympathy and of our abundance.

"Let us remember with gratitude that we live under political institutions which guarantee freedom of conscience to all, and which open every avenue of education and virtue to all who desire to walk therein.

"Let us humbly acknowledge our dependence upon Him from whom all blessings flow, and heartily thank Him for that prosperity which prevails throughout this Commonwealth."

From the Proclamation of Oliver Ames, Governor of Massachusetts, 1887.

Few of us fully realize out of what deep convictions and lofty impulses Thanksgiving Day originated. At the opening of the seventeenth century both Christmas and Good Friday were extravagantly observed by Papists and Anglicans, but the early settlers in New England went to the other extreme, and every ceremony, every rite and observance, and every custom which could in any way seem to identify them with those two great (as they termed them) organizations of Anti-Christ they discarded. That there should be no doubt as to their position they relinquished Christmas and Good Friday, and instituted in their stead Thanksgivng Day at the close of the harvest, to take the place of the former, and Fast Day at the beginning of seed-time, to take the place of the latter. God walked with them by day and by night, and although it was a protest against Papal usage that caused the institution of our day of Thanksgivng, to them it was a triumph of the human will attempting to put itself in harmony with the will of God. When they feasted, as well as when they fasted, they

were to do it as if they felt the close proximity of Jehovah. Self-control in either case was supremely enforced. Their ministers were instructed on days of feasting to admonish the people "to beware of all excess and riot, tending to gluttony or drunkenness—and much more of the sins themselves—in their eating and refreshing; and to take care that their mirth and rejoicing be not carnal, but spiritual, which may make God's praise to be glorious and themselves humble and sober, and that both their feeding and rejoicing may render them the more cheerful and enlarged; and to celebrate His praises in the midst of the congregation."

As we gather in our homes and in our places of worship in the midst of an abundance such as the world has never seen, with opportunities for the expression of life such as the past has never dreamed, shall we not also experience genuine gratitude and renew our own resolutions to live up to the opportunities that confront us? They could send their messengers down to the Narragansetts to plead with Massasoit to furnish them with corn, and then give thanks because they were thus provided with Indian pudding and cold baked corn-cakes, while we are in danger in these luxurious days of laying the emphasis upon the high cost of living and our inability to gain a few more added extravagances. Do we do justice to the conditions that we already have, and do we make the most of the advantages and opportunities that would have caused the Pilgrims to have opened their eyes in wonder as if they were looking upon another world? The sentiment expressed in the proclamation of 1887 is worthy our serious consideration. In the midst of our unprecedented abundance if we can carry out the suggestions there outlined, we may in some measure celebrate Thanksgiving Day in our day and generation in the same spirit and to the same good purpose that the Pilgrims observed it in 1620.

DO THE WILL OF HIM

WILLIAM S. BARNES

Christianity is the life of Jesus repeated in the life of the disciples. That life was righteousness. It was Jesus' meat to do the will of God. To repeat that life, then, is to do right. Hence religion, being in its essence *life,* is open as the day; and that surely is what religion ought to be. The orderly, contented doing of one's work in the faith that it is what God has given us to do, is the loveliest form of life, and therefore, the most worthy and acceptable worship.

"In the way of each of us as we go the errand lies." That which lies next to us in the sequence of things is our duty. We have nothing to do with its conventional importance or dignity. Though trivial or prosaic, it is our business, that is, our religion, to do it with as much sincerity as though it concerned a kingdom, as indeed it does; "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." "Love's secret," it is said, "is to be always doing things for God, and not to mind because they are such very little ones." Profoundly grateful that we have our little place among the ministries of God, and that it is *not* our business to do the impossible, or worry about results, we may "possess our souls in patience."

"What shall I do to gain eternal life?
Discharge aright
The simple dues with which each day is rife,
Yea with thy might.

Ere perfect scheme of action thou devise
Will life be fled;
While he who ever acts as conscience cries,
Will live, though dead."

THE FREEDOM OF A FREE CHURCH

REV. PEMBERTON HALE CRESSEY,

Of the First Church of Christ, Groton, Mass.

With all its attractiveness the idea of a free religion is not without its dangers. In religion, as in other matters, it is as necessary to define and curb our freedom as it is to secure it. It is as necessary to be wise in our use of freedom as it is to be persistent in searching for it and brave in defending it. The idea of freedom is deservedly popular. But it must be clearly understood, or it will lead to the most shallow conceptions of life and duty. To gain adherents to a free religion by presenting it in a way which slights the responsibilities involved is to weaken rather than to strengthen the cause.

What do we really mean when we say that we are advocates of a free religion? What do we mean by a free church? Convenient words often part company with exact meanings, and this is a case in point. For we really mean exactly the opposite from what we say. We say that we are free; but we mean that we are servants. We say that we are unfettered; we mean that we are in bonds. Or if, indeed, we mean less or other than that, our claim of freedom is of slight consequence and may well meet the indifference rather than the admiration of mankind.

If thou thinkest evil, be thou sure
Thy acts will bear the shadow of the stain;
And if thy thought be perfect, then thy deed
Will be as of the perfect, true, and pure.

—*After Confucius.*

THE CONTRARY WEATHERCOCKS

II

Two weathercocks on opposite barns got into a dispute about the wind. One declared that the wind blew from the north, and the other insisted that it came from the south. All day long they contended, and when night came they glowered angrily at each other, pointing in opposite directions in the light of the moon.

The next day they renewed the discussion, neither of them moving in the slightest degree, even though the wind shifted many times, until at last it blew a gale from the east. When night came they stood sullenly looking at each other, one stubbornly pointing to the north and the other to the south.

It so happened that these two weathercocks belonged to two brothers who had married sisters and built their homes beside each other on the great highway to Posterity. For several years they lived in peace, and were happy in their mutual labors. But after a while their wives had a falling out, and, as is usual in such cases, each wife secured the sympathy of her husband. Thereupon the husbands grew to regard each other with suspicion, and finally became settled and irreconcilable enemies. Thus several dismal years passed, and although the two brothers met often, as they went to and fro upon their adjoining farms, neither recognized or spoke to the other.

One day Levi, the elder of the two brothers, noticed that his weathercock pointed north, while that of his brother pointed due south, the wind itself blowing a gale from the east. So he ascended to the cupola of his barn, with tools in hand, to make the necessary repairs. While he was thus employed he happened to look across the way to the other barn, and there, to his surprise,

he saw his brother Eli similarly engaged repairing his own weathercock. Just then their eyes met, and the humor of the situation striking them simultaneously, both burst out in a loud laugh.

"What is the matter with your weathercock?" asked Levi.

"It is twisted. What is the matter with yours?"

"There's a screw loose." And they laughed again.

When they reached the ground they approached each other and shook hands, and Eli remarked, "Those two weathercocks were like you and me. One was twisted and the other had a screw loose."

OUR IDEAL CHURCH

CELIA P. WOOLEY

Our ideal church—what is it? Primarily this: a religious organization whose basis of spiritual union lies deeper than any statement of belief can possibly reach, in the natural emotions of love, awe and gratitude common to all men, emotions that rise with the contemplation of the great mysteries of nature and being. A simple, natural piety pervades the hearts of all the worshipers in this church—men and women of faulty human lives, but with a glowing conviction and inspiring purpose that keeps their faces set in the right direction.

There will be plenty of belief in this church, religious belief, devout, tender and strong; but not the belief that constrains assent from opposing minds, or likes to shape itself in words; rather the belief that takes the form of a continually expanding sense of trust,—trust in that which is above and beyond us, the source of things from which we came; trust in that which is near and

around us, the natural universe, with its wide and everlasting laws; in each other as friends and fellow-workers; and in that wonderful system of social order and progress to which we belong. There will be plenty of believing in this church, but it will be of that glad, spontaneous kind which needs no coercion from another; plenty of the belief that springs, as Rev. J. V. Blake somewhere says, from *credo*—I believe; but nothing of that which owes its origin to *crede*—thou shalt believe. With such a plenitude of belief, fresh, constant, upspringing in the heart like any other natural emotion, like love or the sentiment of goodness,—in belief so supplied and so indestructible in source and quality will be found ample motive for a life full of aspiration and busy well-doing.

Will this church ever be? It already is. For that matter, in so far as it includes every struggling attempt of man to realize it, it always has been. Only now at last we are beginning strictly to recognize its true character and purpose.

"One holy church of God appears
Through every age and race,
Unwasted by the lapse of years,
Unchanged by changing place."

How happy are we to have gained a vision of this church, whose scripture is the written thought of the good and great of all time, whose worship is the setting of the soul in tune with nature and the laws of its own being, whose communion is that of brotherly kindness and love, and whose crowning object is attained in a perfected humanity, freed from all error, suffering and crime, the ideal of which leans towards us through the centuries, at once the witness and reward of all our efforts.

UNITARIAN HYMN

Come, kingdom of our God,
  Sweet reign of peace and love!
Shed peace, and hope, and joy abroad,
  And wisdom from above.

Over our spirits first
  Extend thy healing reign;
There raise and quench the sacred thirst,
  That never pains again.

Come, kingdom of our God!
  And make the broad earth thine;
Stretch o'er her lands and isles the rod
  That flowers with grace divine.

Soon may all tribes be blest
  With fruit from life's glad tree;
And in its shade like brothers rest,
  Sons of one family.

Come, kingdom of our God!
  And raise thy glorious throne
In worlds by the undying trod,
  Where God shall bless his own.

—*John Johns.*

THE RELIGION OF THE HOME

CHARLES F. DOLE

Of the First Congregational (Unitarian) Society, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

The religion of the home is the root of all integrity. It is founded in devotion to the common good. It seeks cheerfully to give more than one ever gets back, of effort, skill, respect, and love. You cannot have integrity without this kind of

will. You do not learn it at the bargain counter. Does anyone imagine that the teaching of this innermost lesson of life can be put off upon strangers or school teachers; that it does not require the most ingenious, intimate and painstaking care from the father and mother, co-operating together to bring the reason and the sympathy and the chivalry of each child to bear for the establishment of character? Do you propose anything so foolish as to use better planning and quicker intelligence and better manners and more patience, outside the house, in the conduct of business, in the treatment of strangers, in social functions, than you are willing to give to the most sacred of all responsibilities—the conduct of the family? Many people are trying this reckless experiment. How many American women there are who study games and the running of automobiles harder than they ever study how to understand their own children, or how to live on noble terms with their own households. Here is another sign of the lack of domestic religion.

There is a deep law of expression which underlies life. What is thought or felt or willed demands to be uttered or acted out. The ritual of religion falls under this law. There is a reasonable ritual of the household religion. It consists in the morning greetings at the breakfast table, in the precious evening confidences between mother and child, in the keeping of birthdays and holidays; it used to be observed in the regular family prayers. Let no one ever despise these time-honored and simple formalities. Let us rather be scared if they have anywhere ceased to be, without anything better to take their place. Let us modern people do better, if we can. Let us not be content to do worse or less.

Does any thoughtful person seriously propose never to make any recognition of the great spiritual realities and faiths and hopes which are

wrapped up with the very existence of our civilization. Have you entered into the profound obligations of marriage without any faith in that most human and spiritual realm, below the level of which men merely range like so many animals? Do husband and wife not even know where to turn for the perennial words of consolation and hope in the hours of inevitable disappointment or sorrow; or where to find expression for the great joys that ever and anon come into the married life? Have they no established and regular means of setting before their own minds, and before the minds of the children, the grand ends and aims which bind human life with sacred cords and make it worth while? No wonder that we often have to look on households in trouble or discord or pain with one deep and hopeless comment of pity and commiseration: "These neighbors of ours have no religion." Perhaps they professed a religion in church, but they never had practised the household religion.

I protest that the modern world is not poorer in the means of an honest domestic ritual than the world of our fathers. Its Bible is larger and more varied than the limits of the Old and New Testaments. Innumerable hymns and noble words of the prophets of all ages and nations are to be had, if desired, for the use of the humblest household. They serve to teach us new respect for all races of men. Do you suppose the busiest people could not afford the time, perhaps at the breakfast table, or at nightfall, to turn their thoughts for a moment to some great verse of inspiration, and so get the tune and rhythm of the work of the day, or the respite of an emancipating trust in "the Eternal Goodness?" The fact is, everyone desperately needs this kind of uplift, with all that family prayer ever meant, to the end that we may keep the social family temper, and face life like men.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. —*Phil., iv.,* 8.

NEWS NOTES

In the town of Littleton, Mass., where one of our strongest and most enthusiastic rural churches is located, the congregations are excellent and the spirit of enthusiasm highly encouraging. Every family in town is considered within the fold of some particular church, and has been asked to keep at least one Sunday as "church home day," by making a special effort to be present at the services of the particular church to which the individual belongs.

Our attention has been called to a unique organization known as the "Strollers," belonging to the Unitarian church in Montclair, N. J. The object of this group is to stroll to different points of interest in and about the city of Montclair. Without hurry and in pleasant companionship the members visit places of scenic interest and of historic significance. The results are both educational and athletic, and many pleasant memories are thus inspired. Little journeys have recently been made to Ellis Island, the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts, through the New York Ghetto and through old Nieuw Amsterdam. The most popular of these journeys have been sociological ones. Plans have been developed for trips through Russian, Chinese, Italian and Hungarian New York.

Mr. Weil, minister of the Unitarian church of Bellingham, Wash., adopts the familiar method of sending postal cards to all those interested in his church and those who may become interested, announcing the various functions of his church. But the paragraph which has especially attracted our attention is as follows: "A simple, reverent service precedes the sermon, and the time occupied altogether, beginning at 11 o'clock each Sunday morning, is one hour."

It is gratifying to the people in Winnipeg to have secured the services of the Rev. Horace Westwood, of Youngstown, who has begun his work in this great city of the North. The opportunity for Unitarianism is a great and genuine one, and with Mr. Westwood's experience as a pioneer of Unitarianism, we believe that a new church building and an enlarged membership will lead to self-support and extended influence in the city.

A correspondent writes as follows: "Kindly send me some sermons on Satan, Devils, Demoniacal possessions," etc. "On this subject of Devils I am unable to find any satisfactory literature." To many Unitarians a request of this kind will be surprising, but still more astonishing would be a knowledge of the actual fact that in many parts of our country the belief in personal devils as actually dominating the lives of people is so thoroughly entrenched that the usual arguments of common sense and experience are unable to unsettle it.

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UNSEEN EMPIRE

A Study of the Plight of Nations That Do Not Pay their Debts.

By DAVID STARR JORDAN

Several years ago Dr. Jordan began the study of the "eugenics of war," the results of which were set forth in two books published by the Association, "The Blood of the Nation" and "The Human Harvest." The author soon found it necessary, however, to supplement his study with a still broader one, that might be termed the "euthenics of war," or non-hereditary effects of the financial impoverishment of the rank and file of the people by the cost of war and war armament.

The present volume is the result of this more extended investigation. President Jordan here shows that civilized nations are all in their degree under the domination of a power stronger than kings or parliaments, more lasting than armies or navies, the unseen Empire of Finance. He further shows that this mastery is not now in the hands of individual men, however powerful, but that it has passed over into an impersonal Empire of Debt. Many of the essential statements which Dr. Jordan makes have been verified by leading bankers both in this country and abroad. There is an "unseen empire" that can to a certain, and perhaps to a large degree, sway the destinies of nations, and the method, if not the exact extent of it, is told in this highly informing and suggestive volume.

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